

**Core Question 3: Is the organization effective and well run?**

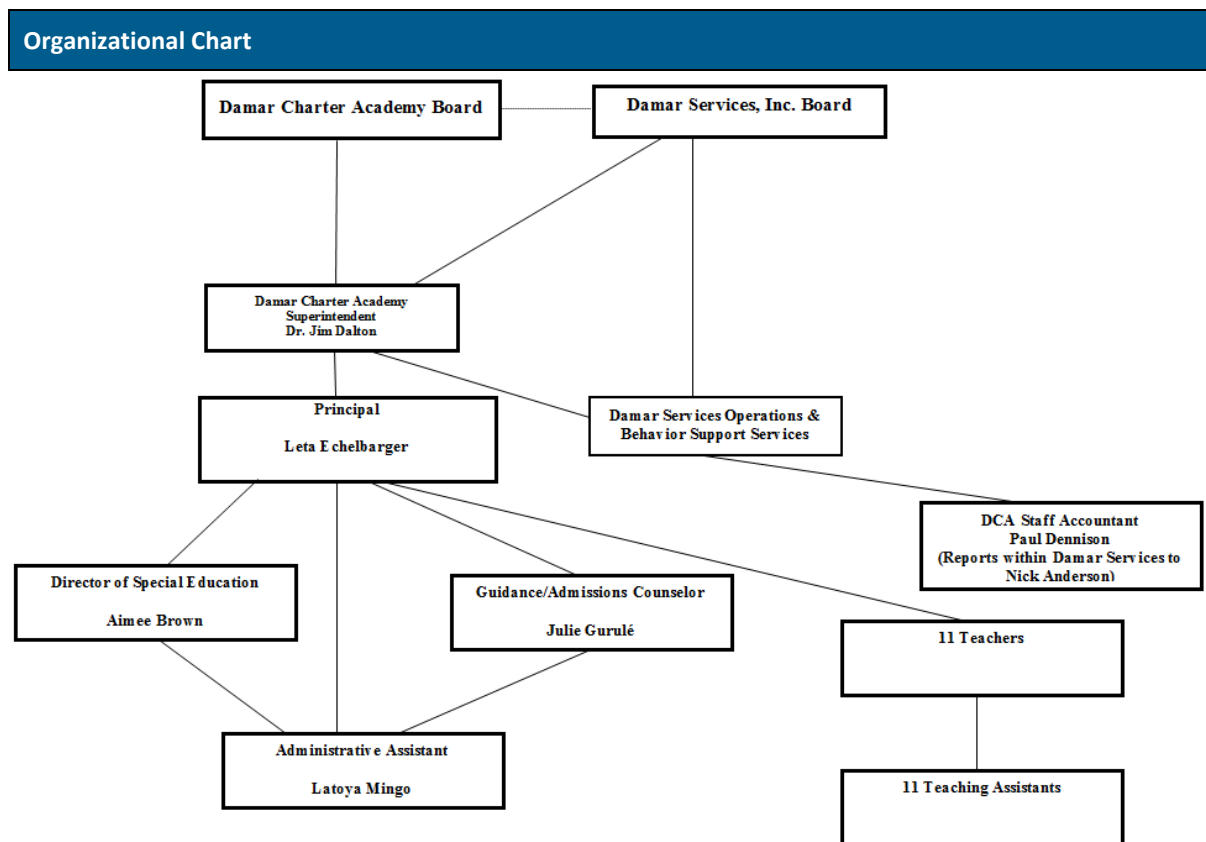
The Governance and Leadership Performance Framework, outlined in Core Question 3, gauges the academic and operational leadership of schools. Core Question 3 consists of five indicators designed to measure schools on how well their school administration and board of directors comply with the terms of their charter agreement, applicable laws, and authorizer expectations.

3.1. Is the school leader strong in his or her academic and organizational leadership?							
<b>Indicator Targets</b>	Does not meet standard	The school leader presents concerns in a majority of the sub-indicators with no evidence of a credible plan to address the issues.					
	Approaching standard	The school leader presents concerns in a minimal number of the sub-indicators and may or may not have a credible plan to address the issues.					
	Meets standard	The school leader complies with and presents no concerns in the sub-indicators below.					
	Exceeds standard	The school leader consistently and effectively complies with and presents no concerns in the sub-indicators below.					
<b>3.1 Rating</b>	<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Year 3</b>	<b>Year 4</b>	<b>Year 5</b>	<b>Year 6</b>	<b>Year 7</b>
	2011-12	2012-13	<b>2013-14</b>	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
	MS	MS	MS				
<b>Sub-indicator Ratings</b>	Sub-indicators						Rating
	Demonstration of sufficient academic and leadership experience						ES
	Leadership stability in key administrative positions						MS
	Communication with internal and external stakeholders						MS
	Clarity of roles among schools and staff						ES
	Engagement in a continuous process of improvement and establishment of systems for addressing areas of deficiency in a timely manner						MS
	Consistency in providing information to and consulting with the schools' board of directors						MS

The leadership team at Damar Charter Academy (DCA) consists of the Superintendent, Principal, and Director of Special Education. As a team, they demonstrate extensive experience in education. The superintendent spent several years supporting special education in schools, teaching at the higher education level, and earning a doctorate in clinical psychology. He has worked with Damar Services, Inc., the parent organization of DCA, since 2002 and has worked with the school since its opening in 2011. The principal taught special

education for several years and earned multiple degrees before becoming principal in 2012. The Director of Special Education has been with Damar Services, Inc. since 1996, serving as a manager, instructor, coordinator, and director for multiple programs within the organization. Together, with additional support from the school Guidance Counselor, they developed and managed a well-recruited and trained staff to serve the needs of a unique and diverse student population. Roles and responsibilities were clearly delineated to support high quality school operations.

In order to allow the principal to focus mostly on internal communications and school operations, the Superintendent handled the majority of communications with external stakeholders, including Damar Services, Inc., the Board of Directors, Board Chair, Mayor's Office, and community partners. The Superintendent and Principal attended every board meeting and presented on the school's progress.



The Superintendent and Principal were able to accurately and transparently describe DCA's strengths and areas for improvement. For example, to better support students, the school transitioned to a year-round calendar and implemented a comprehensive vocational training curriculum during the 2013-2014 school year. They collected a variety of data on student performance and constantly worked to improve the DCA student experience.

Overall, the school leadership was consistently effective in its organizational and academic oversight and receives a meeting standard for this indicator.

3.2. Does the school satisfactorily comply with all its organizational structure and governance obligations?							
<b>Indicator Targets</b>	Does not meet standard		The school presents concerns in a majority of the sub-indicators with no evidence of a credible plan to address the issues.				
	Approaching standard		The school presents concerns in a minimal number of the sub-indicators and may or may not have a credible plan to address the issues.				
	Meets standard		The school complies with and presents no concerns in the sub-indicators below.				
	Exceeds standard		The school consistently and effectively complies with and presents no concerns in the sub-indicators below.				
<b>3.2 Rating</b>	<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Year 3</b>	<b>Year 4</b>	<b>Year 5</b>	<b>Year 6</b>	<b>Year 7</b>
	2011-12	2012-13	<b>2013-14</b>	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
	MS	ES	MS				
<b>Sub-indicator Ratings</b>	Sub-indicators						Rating
	Submission of all required compliance documentation in a timely manner as set forth by the Mayor's Office, including but not limited to: meeting minutes and schedules, board member information, compliance reports and employee documentation						AS
	Compliance with the terms of its charter, including amendments, school policies and regulations, and applicable federal and state laws						MS
	Proactive and productive collaboration with its board and/or management organization (if applicable) in meeting governance obligations						MS
	Active participation in scheduled meetings with OEI, including the submission of required documentation by deadlines						MS

During the 2013-2014 school year, DCA submitted all compliance documentation to the Mayor's Office (OEI) and met its governance obligations. Although there were a few months throughout the year that documents were submitted after the deadline, the school actively engaged multiple personnel to ensure that all requirements were met and documents such as employee spreadsheets, board meeting minutes, and quarterly reports were submitted.

In addition to compliance documentation, DCA maintained compliance with all material sections of its charter and submitted amendments as necessary. The Superintendent and Principal were consistently and actively engaged in meetings with OEI and the Superintendent maintained frequent communication with OEI between scheduled meetings. For these reasons, DCA is meeting standard for compliance obligations.

<b>3.3. Is the school's board active, knowledgeable, and does it abide by appropriate policies, systems, and processes in its oversight?</b>							
<b>Indicator Targets</b>	Does not meet standard		The school presents concerns in a majority of the sub-indicators with no evidence of a credible plan to address the issues.				
	Approaching standard		The school presents concerns in a minimal number of the sub-indicators and may or may not have a credible plan to address the issues.				
	Meets standard		The school complies with and presents no concerns in the sub-indicators below.				
	Exceeds standard		The school consistently and effectively complies with and presents no concerns in the sub-indicators below.				
<b>3.3 Rating</b>	<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Year 3</b>	<b>Year 4</b>	<b>Year 5</b>	<b>Year 6</b>	<b>Year 7</b>
	2011-12	2012-13	<b>2013-14</b>	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
	MS	MS	MS				
<b>Sub-indicator Ratings</b>	Sub-indicators						Rating
	Timely communication of organizational, leadership, academic, fiscal, or facility deficiencies to the Mayor's Office; or when the school's management company (if applicable) fails to meet its obligations as set forth in the charter						MS
	Clear understanding of the mission and vision of the school						ES
	Adherence to board policies and procedures, including those established in the by-laws, and revision of policies and procedures, as necessary						MS
	Recruitment and selection of members that are knowledgeable, represent diverse skill sets, and act in the best interest of the school and establishment of systems for member orientation and training						MS
	Effective and transparent management of conflicts of interest						MS
	Collaboration with school leadership that is fair, timely, consistent, and transparent in handling complaints or concerns						MS
	Adherence to its charter agreement as it pertains to governance structure						MS
	Holding of all meetings in accordance with Indiana Open Door Law						MS

The board of directors for Damar Charter School (DCS) is active, experienced, and provides competent oversight for the school. The board is comprised of individuals with experience in business, finance, education, healthcare, and real estate. In an effort to ensure alignment and a transparent relationship, the current board chair is also an employee of Damar Services, Inc. The board did experience some turnover between the previous and current school years, but consistently worked to recruit new members. They were able to successfully recruit a parent to serve on the board and further diversify representation and skillsets.

A review of meeting minutes and notes demonstrates the board's clear understanding of and commitment to the school's mission to provide individualized academic programming to students with developmental and related challenges. Given that Damar serves a unique population, the state's standard evaluation system did not provide a comprehensive assessment of the school's performance. However, the board, along with school leadership and the Mayor's Office, worked to develop meaningful goals and targets for DCA that would demonstrate successful student outcomes. Board members discussed the need to maintain high expectations for staff and students, but remained supportive and understanding of the unique school configuration and challenges. The board met every other month and regularly met quorum, with the majority of directors regularly in attendance. Directors received board packets in advance and received updates from the Superintendent and Principal. All board members were regularly engaged in school updates and progress and demonstrated their commitment to the school by offering their insights and experience on a regular basis.

#### Skill Sets Represented on Board

Education



Business



Finance



Healthcare



Real Estate



Parent



The board and Superintendent maintained consistent communication with one another and the Mayor's Office. DCA raised two main concerns to the Mayor's office: the viability of the state accountability system and the status of its partnership with the Indiana Department of Child Services. In both cases, the Superintendent and Board Chair provided up to date and transparent information and noted any outstanding action items necessary to reach resolutions. Overall, both the board and the school were proactive in communicating updates and concerns with the Mayor's Office.

#### Board Overview

**Damar Charter School, Inc. holds the charter for Damar Charter Academy.**

**9** **majority**  
**Members** **# Required for Quorum**

**The DCA board meets bi-monthly.**

**DCA contracts with Damar Services, Inc. to provide financial, administrative, and operational support to the school. Additionally, Damar Services appoints four directors to the board, while five are elected independently.**

In governance operations, the board maintained compliance with its bylaws throughout the course of the year, with no formal review noted. Meetings were held as scheduled, the board met quorum, and it abided by Indiana Open Door Law. One potential conflict of interest is having a Board Chair who is also an employee of the school's management organization. Thus far, the board has properly managed this conflict by following legal protocol.

Due to the consistent leadership and stewardship of the board of directors, DCA is meeting standard for board governance.

3.4. Does the school's board work to foster a school environment that is viable and effective?							
<b>Indicator Targets</b>	Does not meet standard		The school presents concerns in a majority of the sub-indicators with no evidence of a credible plan to address the issues.				
	Approaching standard		The school presents concerns in a minimal number of the sub-indicators and may or may not have a credible plan to address the issues.				
	Meets standard		The school complies with and presents no concerns in the sub-indicators below.				
	Exceeds standard		The school consistently and effectively complies with and presents no concerns in the sub-indicators below.				
<b>3.4 Rating</b>	<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Year 3</b>	<b>Year 4</b>	<b>Year 5</b>	<b>Year 6</b>	<b>Year 7</b>
	2011-12	2012-13	<b>2013-14</b>	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
	n/a	n/a	AS				
<b>Sub-indicator Ratings</b>	Sub-indicators						Rating
	Regular communication with school leadership and/or its management company						MS
	Annual utilization of a performance based evaluation to assess its own performance, that of the school leader, and management organization (if applicable)						AS
	Collaboration with the school leader to establish clear objectives, priorities, and goals						AS
	Interaction with school leader that is conducive to the success of the school, including requesting and disseminating information in a timely manner, providing continuous and constructive feedback, and engaging the school leader in school improvement plans						MS

The DCA board held meetings every other month in which all stakeholders, including the Superintendent and Principal, provided reports on school updates. Between meetings, the Superintendent communicated with the Board Chair when necessary to provide leadership and support in school initiatives and events. As the Chief Financial Officer of Damar Services, Inc., the Board Chair also acted as an intermediary between the management organization and the school.

Annually, the Superintendent provides a thorough evaluation of the Principal, but the board has not yet implemented a formalized system and process for evaluating its own performance or that of the Superintendent. Additionally, while the Superintendent was charged with regularly evaluating the Principal's performance, there was no systematic way of sharing this information with the board. School reports at the board meetings focused more around special events than school data and progress. Board members did raise a concern about this trend towards the end of the school year, and they discussed changing protocol in future years. Although the board provided informal, formative feedback on school progress, it would benefit from establishing a much clearer set of goals and benchmarks for itself and the school leaders.

In all observed meetings and interactions, the board and school leadership team appeared to have a positive and collaborative working relationship. Board members regularly asked questions, provided feedback, and engaged with school leaders in a way that demonstrated a consistent commitment to school improvement. However, due to the lack of formalized evaluation systems, DCA is approaching standard for school and board environment.

3.5. Does the school comply with applicable laws, regulations, and provisions of the charter agreement relating to the safety and security of the facility?							
<b>Indicator Targets</b>	Does not meet standard		The school presents concerns in a majority of the sub-indicators with no evidence of a credible plan to address the issues.				
	Approaching standard		The school presents concerns in a minimal number of the sub-indicators and may or may not have a credible plan to address the issues.				
	Meets standard		The school complies with and presents no concerns in the sub-indicators below.				
	Exceeds standard		The school consistently and effectively complies with and presents no concerns in the sub-indicators below.				
<b>3.5 Rating</b>	<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Year 3</b>	<b>Year 4</b>	<b>Year 5</b>	<b>Year 6</b>	<b>Year 7</b>
	2011-12	2012-13	<b>2013-14</b>	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
	MS	MS	MS				
<b>Sub-indicator Ratings</b>	Sub-indicators						Rating
	Health and safety code requirements						MS
	Facility accessibility						MS
	Updated safety and emergency management plans						MS
	A facility that is well suited to meet the curricular and social needs of the students, faculty, and members of the community						ES

In 2013-14, DCA's facility met all health and safety code requirements and provided a safe environment conducive to learning. The facility's design, size, maintenance, security, equipment and furniture were all adequate to meet the school's needs. The school was accessible to all, including people with physical disabilities. The Mayor's Office monitoring of DCA's compliance with health and safety code requirements did not reveal any significant concerns related to these obligations. Accordingly, the school is meeting standard for this indicator for 2013-14.